

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 have been amended and new Claims 7-20 have been added. The amendments further define the invention. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification and figures, specifically page 23, lines 11-15 and Figures 1, 4, 6, 11, and 14. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the Claims. The attached page is entitled "Version with markings to show changes made".

Rejection under 35 USC 102

Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Cockburn (WO 97/06073). Cockburn discloses a sachet formed of layers. One of the layers is a semi-rigid layer with a score or weak point used to expel the contents of the sachet. The layers are sealed together at their edges through the use of heated rollers (page 10, second paragraph). The present invention, as amended in the Claims, requires a plurality of discrete, noncontinuous bond sites as shown in Figures 1, 4, and 6. These bond sites are located through the webs and not specifically along the edges. In addition to being discrete and noncontinuous, the bond sites of the present invention are small (less than 0.2 inches long and less than 0.02 inches wide) and used to bond the layers together at discrete bond sites and not continuously along an edge. Upon the application of force as described in the present invention, the bond sites will fracture to facilitate exposure of a substance. This is in contrast to Cockburn which has continuous seals along the edges to joint the layers and a specially added score or weak point in the semi-rigid layer in which the contents of the reservoir can be expelled via the hole formed at the score or weak point when the semi-rigid layer is bent. Therefore, the disclosure in Cockburn does not anticipate the substance encapsulating system as required in the amended claims. Cockburn does not teach or disclose the discrete, noncontinuous bond sites of the present invention.

Claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Friemel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,597,218). Friemel et al. discloses a sachet for accommodating a gas-evolving pest control agent. The sachet is comprised of a nonwoven fabric with welded seams. The welded seams are needed for their strength and reliability to prevent the pest control agent and/or dust-like residue from escaping (column 1, lines 42-68). The sealing or welding seams are generally stronger and

more tear-resistant than the other parts of the sachets and are suitable to be provided with apertures, holes, metal eyelets, etc. so that a string may be passed through (column 7, lines 27-52). The welded seams, which form the sachet, are 5-10 mm (column 8, lines 20-30). The sachet may have one sachet pocket or multiple individual sachet pockets. The sachet containing the gas-evolving pest control agent is placed in a strong envelope and the envelope is opened prior to use (column 10, lines 32-45).

The present invention, as amended in the Claims, requires a plurality of discrete, noncontinuous bond sites. These bond sites are located through the webs and not used to form seams. The bond sites of the present invention are small, less than 0.2 inches long and less than 0.02 inches wide as compared to Friemel et al which has welded seams from 5-10 mm. The bond sites in the present invention are much smaller as would be required to place a metal eyelet and string through. Upon the application of force as described in the present invention, the bond sites will fracture to facilitate exposure of a substance. This is in contrast to Friemel which states that the welding seams are stronger and more tear-resistant. Based on the disclosure in Friemel et al., the present invention would not be anticipated. Friemel does not teach or even suggest using small, discrete, noncontinuous bond sites (which may fracture to form an aperture) to join webs together.

Claims 3 and 6 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Dickinson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,876,023) Dickinson et al. discloses a laundry product containing pre-measured amounts of laundry actives in a sachet which has acceptable storage and excellent product dissolution characteristics (column 1, lines 35-40). The sachet is formed by bonding together the edges to form a frangible seal (column 3, lines 1-10). The sachet can also be a laminate which is bonded together along seal lines to define one or more closed, non-connecting pockets (column 3, lines 10-18). An example in Dickinson et al. states that a sheet of substrate measuring 120 mm x 80 mm is folded and heat-sealed along two opposing free edges (column 10, lines 4-12). The seam would therefore be approximately 60 mm long. In the present invention as amended in the Claims, a plurality of discrete, noncontinuous bond sites as shown in Figures 1, 4, and 6 are required. These bond sites are located throughout the webs and not specifically along the edges. In addition to being discrete and noncontinuous, the bond sites of the present invention are small, less than 0.2 inches long and less than 0.02 inches wide as compared to 60 mm long. The bond sites of the present invention would not be described as seams. Dickinson et al. uses the seams to make closed, non-connecting pockets. The

short, discrete bonds of the present invention could not be used to make closed, non-connecting pockets of Dickinson et al. Therefore, the disclosure in Dickinson et al. does not anticipate the substance encapsulation system as required in the amended claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest effort to distinguish the claimed invention from the applied documents and place the Claims in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application, in view of the amendments and remarks provided, and allowance of Claims 1-20 are requested. In the event that issues remain prior to allowance of the pending claims, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' undersigned attorney to discuss any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system capable of being apertured under a tensioning force, said system comprising:
 - (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction;
 - (b) an edible substance selected from the group consisting of/ flavoring ingredients, food colorings, sweeteners, nutrients, and combinations thereof, disposed between said first and second webs; and
 - (c) wherein upon application of a sufficient force having a vector component parallel to said transverse axis, said bond site fractures to form a corresponding aperture to facilitate exposure of said substance.

2. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system capable of being apertured under a tensioning force, said system comprising:
 - (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction;
 - (b) an agricultural substance selected from the group consisting of seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and combinations thereof, disposed between said first and second webs; and
 - (c) wherein upon application of a sufficient force having a vector component parallel to said transverse axis, said bond site fractures to form a corresponding aperture to facilitate exposure of said substance.

3. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system capable of being apertured under a tensioning force, said system comprising:

- (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction;
 - (b) an odor-absorbing substance disposed between said first and second webs; and
 - (c) wherein upon application of a sufficient force having a vector component parallel to said transverse axis, said bond site fractures to form a corresponding aperture to facilitate exposure of said substance.
4. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system comprising:
- (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, [said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction]; and
 - (b) a central layer being disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs, said central layer containing an edible substance selected from the group consisting of flavoring ingredients, food colorings, sweeteners, nutrients, and combinations thereof, to be exposed.
5. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system comprising:
- (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, [said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction]; and
 - (b) a central layer being disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs, said central layer containing an agricultural substance selected

from the group consisting of seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and combinations thereof, to be exposed.

6. (Amended) A substance encapsulation system comprising:
 - (a) a first web and a second web, said first and second webs joined to one another in a face-to-face relationship by [at least one] --a plurality of bond sites, each-- bond site defining [an] --a discrete, noncontinuous-- elongated melt weakened region having an aspect ratio of at least about 2, [said bond site having a longitudinal axis oriented in a first direction and a transverse axis oriented in a second direction orthogonal to said first direction]; and
 - (b) a central layer being disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs, said central layer containing an odor-absorbing substance to be exposed.
7. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 1, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
8. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 1, wherein the substance is continuously disposed between said first and second webs.
9. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 2, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
10. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 2, wherein the substance is continuously disposed between said first and second webs.
11. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 3, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
12. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 3, wherein the substance is continuously disposed between said first and second webs.
13. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 4, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
14. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 4, wherein the central layer is continuously disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs.

15. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 5, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
16. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 5, wherein the central layer is continuously disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs.
17. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 6, wherein the bond sites have a length of less than about 0.2 inches and a width of less than about 0.02 inches.
18. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 6, wherein the central layer is continuously disposed between at least a portion of said first and second webs.
19. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 1 wherein the bond sites are regularly repeating.
20. (New) The substance encapsulation system of Claim 4 wherein the bond sites are regularly repeating.